Program: **ELECTRONIC WHOLE EARTH CATALOG**

Producer: Brøderbund Software
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903-2101
800/527-6263

Type: **Multimedia Database**

Cost: $149.00

Equip: Requires HyperCard 1.2 (provided);
Macintosh Plus and up;
Apple CD SC drive or 100% compatible CD-ROM drive

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In the beginning, that is circa 1968, visionary Stewart Brand set out to create the ultimate access service - namely what he called a "Low Maintenance, High-Yield, Self-Sustaining Critical Information Service." Published in various representations as the *Whole Earth Catalog, Last Whole Earth Catalog, Whole Earth Epilog*, the *Next Whole Earth Catalog*, and the *Essential Whole Earth Catalog*, Brand and his team have achieved a worldwide following with over 2,500,000 copies sold.

The Electronic Whole Earth Catalog, distributed by Brøderbund Software, is the next incarnation of what has become an essential compendium of useful tools, services and information covering a broad range of interests. This CD-ROM version which uses HyperCard as its engine not only includes the fabulous reviews of the fascinating tools and sources of information that has made the Whole Earth Catalog series legendary but has, in addition, permitted the ultimate in cross-referencing through HyperCard's interactive linking functions. Not only can a user access text and pictures as in the printed versions but now has the added feature of sound as a means of sampling the wares waiting to be discovered within its 413 megabytes of CD-ROM storage. By utilizing the mass storage capabilities with the flexibility of HyperCard, Brand and his associates (which included members of the HyperCard Development Team) were able to, in his words, "jam in all the good stuff..." so "...the 'book' would fit in a jacket pocket."

And good stuff it is. Each entry (over 2,500 in this CD-ROM version alone) contains a concise review by an expert in that subject, text excerpts of the reviewed item and up-to-date information on how and where to get that item. The Catalog also contains over 2,000 digitized images ranging from cartoons and illustration to photographs. In addition, this version also gives the

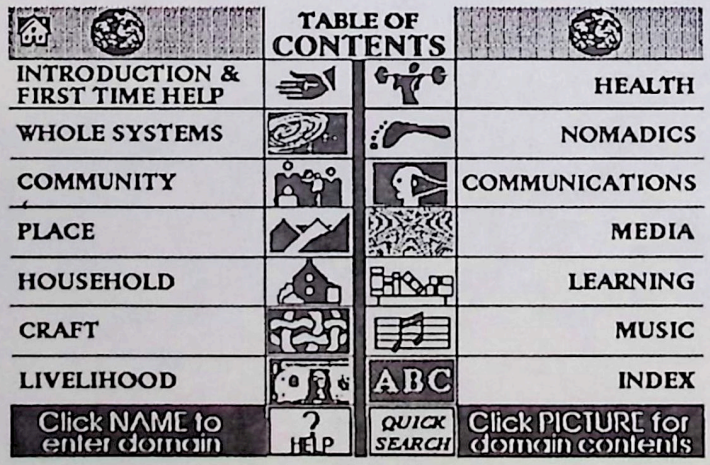

Figure 1: Electronic Whole Earth Catalog's Table of Contents Card

Apple Library Users Group - Vol 7 #4 Oct 1989

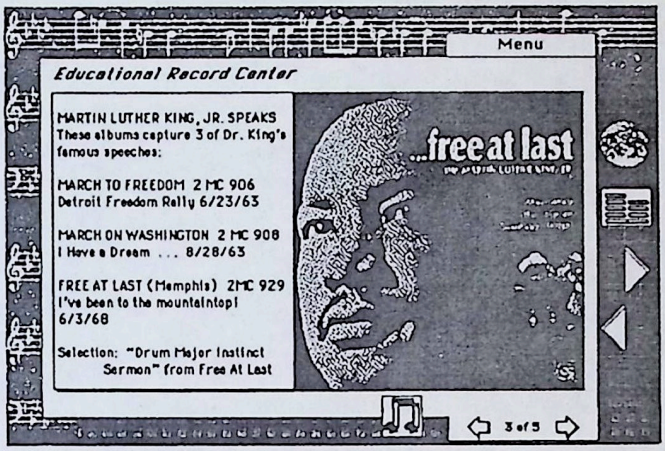

Figure 2: Article card showing digitized photo of album cover and music button containing digitized sound sample.

user access to actual sound bites from over 200 recordings ranging from spoken word to classical to blues.

The Electronic Whole Earth Catalog requires HyperCard 1.2 or above (supplied in the CD-ROM) and an Apple CD SC CD-ROM drive or 100% compatible to operate. To run it, just place the disk in the caddy, put the caddy in the CD-ROM drive's slot and double-click on the "Whole Earth" stack.

The Table of Contents greets the user upon opening. There are four different means of accessing the massive amounts of information contained in the CD-ROM. Clicking on the Domain name brings you to that domain. Clicking on the Domain icon reveals the Domain contents. You can also search via an extensive Index or via the use of the Electronic Whole Earth Catalog's Quick Search engine.

The Table of Contents card displays thirteen domains ranging from Whole Systems to Music. Clicking on the Domain name takes you to that domain. Each Domain card contains numerous Section titles. Clicking on a section title then brings up a Cluster card containing clusters of articles related to a chosen topic. Clicking on any cluster name reveals the names of individual articles on a specific subject. From there, the user can choose a specific article.

The Article cards contain page turner arrows by which the user can access the next or previous card of that article. Some cards within an article are called Access cards. These are parts of an article that provide ordering information. In addition, some articles have Excerpt cards which can contain text, picture or sound excerpts from the reviewed item. Cards with sound excerpts have a button indicating musical notation.

Besides those already mentioned, there are other navigation devices. On the right portion of each card are four buttons. The topmost is the Earth button. This takes the user back to the Table of Contents card. The next is a Card button which is used to move the user up one full level in the hierarchy. Finally, there are the Forward and Reverse arrow buttons which allow the user to move back and forth between articles.

In addition to that, there is a pop-up menu button on most cards. Holding it down reveals access paths to various levels or special services available on the CD-ROM. For example, the user can skip through different levels within a domain. The user also has immediate access to the extensive on-line help system provided on the Electronic Whole Earth Catalog as well as the index and Quick Search engine. Depending on the level that you are in at the moment, you can also print multiple card articles for later review. And if you are in the Access card, you can print out

an order form directly to your ImageWriter or LaserWriter. All you have to do is fill out the quantity of the item you want to purchase; the Electronic Whole Earth Catalog does the rest, filling in the name and address of the vendor, the name of the item and the price.

A typical search might go like this: clicking on the Music domain name shows the Music domain card. This card has five choices available: Learning & Earning; Music Magazines; Playing Music; Recordings By Mail I; and Recordings By Mail II. Choosing Recordings By Mail I shows a Section card which reveals six clickable sections including one called Children's. Clicking on that reveals three clusters of vendors as well as six cross-references to related vendors. Clicking on one, Educational Record Center, shows an access card plus excerpts from various recordings including a collection of speeches by Dr. Martin Luther King. Clicking on the music excerpt button plays an excerpt from Dr. King's "I've been to the mountaintop!" speech through the built-in Macintosh speaker.

If you know what you're looking for, you can use either the Index or Quick Search engine. The Index a series of 23 cards (each representing a letter of the alphabet) containing alphabetical lists of all articles to be found in the Electronic Whole Earth Catalog. The Quick Search engine consists of a card which allows searching by subject, title, author or full text. Furthermore, the user can either search throughout the entire catalog or limit a search to one of the thirteen domains via a pop-up menu button. On the right is a subject field listing subject headings plus the number of occurrences of that subject. This, of course, changes depending on whether the search is throughout the entire catalog or restricted to a domain.

The price of all this mass storage is, of course, speed. CD-ROMs still do not achieve anything near the speeds of the latest hard disks and are more like floppy disks in terms of their access time. The Electronic Whole Earth Catalog is a slowpoke even on a Macintosh IIcx with 4MB of RAM. However, this is a small price to pay for such a wealth of information.

If you have a public access Mac in your library acting as a CD-ROM workstation or are planning one, the Electronic Whole Earth Catalog should be near the top of your "must buy" CD-ROMs. But beware, once you get a patron working with it, they may never want to get off.

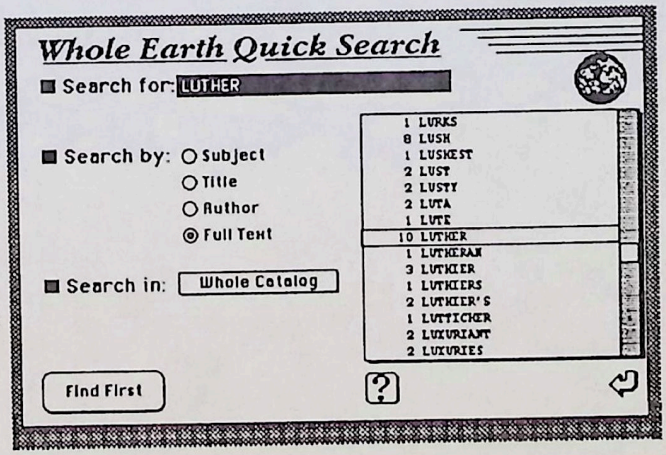

Figure 3: Whole Earth Quick Search engine.